



## **SYNOD OF MAR ABA I, CATHOLICOS.**

**544 AD**

This is a copy of the ecclesiastical writings which were made, with the grace of God, by the Archbishop Saint Mar Aba I, patriarch, and by the friends of God, the metropolitans and other bishops, in this month of Hray in the 13th year of the victory of the gentle, merciful and beneficent Khosrow, King of kings — may it be preserved by the grace of God! and in the 5th year of the Catholic government of the patriarchate of the holy archbishop Mar Aba, catholicos and patriarch.

After, by the grace of the Lord Christ, the charity of God his Father, and the communication of the Holy Spirit to the duality of patriarchy introduced by Mar Elisha and Mar Narsi who had completely ceased and the unity of government Catholic and patriarchal would have been reestablished in this seat of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, throughout the East and neighboring countries, thanks to the diligence of the Archbishop Mar Aba, Patriarch, and the holy synod of the friends of God, the metropolitans and bishops who had assembled with him. After the canons concerning the way of life appropriate to those who have been baptized in the sacrament of spiritual adoption for eternal life had been settled; — after the archbishop, patriarch, had himself engaged in the struggle for the name of Christ and the canons of his holy Church, and had been, because of this struggle, thrown into exile for the truth.

Then grace did not allow him to remain silent; but, for the confirmation, the sanction, the stability of the prescriptions and canons relating to the unity of the Catholic government, which belongs and which is inherent, according to apostolic tradition, to the patriarchal seat of the Church of Koke, in the city of Seleucia, on which the Church depends all the dioceses of the entire eastern region and neighboring countries, as regards the true faith, the definitions and the precepts

which are suitable for the practice of Christianity of the children of the Church, — (grace, I say,) pushed him to bring together the writings made under his inspiration.

Among its merits are: the orthodox synod of provincial reforms, those which concern the orthodoxy of the faith and have provided its integrity, those which relate to the rectitude of good morals. Those which make known the testimony of the two persons who introduced duality, as well as the concessions and sanctions relating to those which had been established by these people. And those which concern the definitions and canons relating to the diversities of ecclesiastical government; the Practica, which contains the greater part of these things and adds Implication of each of them, etc.

It should be first said- Let us pray for provincial reforms, which will take place here.

In the month of Tesrin-Qdim, which is Tirmah, the merciful and well-offered Khosrow, King of kings, may he be preserved in the possession of his kingdom, in the health of the body, in joy of Time, in his merciful will and in his good designs for many years, protected by the grace of God!

By the grace of God, creator, lord and governor of all things, and by the care of the new Cyrus, who prevails over all kings, the meek and merciful Khosrow, King of kings, to whom, because of his good will, Christ, the Redeemer of all creatures, lies all the goods on his holy Church;

At the same time that, through the diligence and vigilance of faithful priests, the metropolitans and zealous bishops of each place; prayers of all the saints, the duality of the principate, which is as odious before God and shameful before men, as a woman who would belong to two husbands or a body which would have two heads, having ceased and disappeared totally, after having reigned for about fifteen years in all the churches of the whole glorious kingdom of the Persians, of all the rest of the East and neighboring countries, because of the relaxation of the egoists who did not fear to corrupt the apostolic canons, before which the demons themselves tremble, and Satan their chief. The unity of government was henceforth reconstituted in the seat of the patriarchate fixed according to the apostolic tradition of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, the capital city known as Beit Aramaye: and from the direction of this apostolic and patemel seat derive and propagate the spiritual ordinations, the canonical integrity, the fair sentence for all states and orders of the ministry of the apostolic priesthood, for each country and each city of the entire territory of the Persian Empire, the rest of the East and neighboring countries.

The weakness of the holy friend of Christ, the patriarch Mar Aba, was comforted, and as soon as the two great cities were pacified, he left Kiris(?) of the royal residence, [in the region] of Peroz-Sabour, town of the Tayyay. This, which was previously troubled, was also pacified. Without delay, he descended to the land of Kaskar, with the help of divine grace which [also touched] the spirit of the holy friends of God, Mar Paulus, bishop, metropolitan of Beit Laphat and of the whole country of [Beit] Houzaye, Mar Salmai, bishop of Karka-Ledan, Mar Mihrnars, bishop of Zabe, Mar Sila, bishop of Hormizd-Ardasir, Mar Elisee, bishop of Soustere, Mar Kosrau, bishop of Sous, who resettled near him, in the town of Zizwarda. There, after much destruction, exhortation, and urging, all the people of Kaskar set out to agree between them. They chose and established, to be their pastor and their bishop, the friend of God, Mar Samuel, by the consent of all the country which was confined to him. Masarsia and Samuel, who disputed mutually the episcopate in the time of discord, were then, in the time of the Age of Peace, deprived of all episcopate titles and functions; and they submitted with great joy to Mar Samuel their bishop, fulfilling in his presence the presbyteral functions, as they were permitted, in accordance with ecclesiastical canons.

The holy friend of Christ, the patriarch Mar Aba, left there with the other friends of God, the bishops, and Mar Samuel with them. They entered the country of Maisan. After having made many abuses disappear and there on their route, they reached the city of Pherat, in the metropolis of Maisan. There, the bishops were expelled, chased away and deprived forever of rank, functions, title and episcopal authority. Taimai, son of Ann has already been a bad worker in the Church of God, because of the divisions and dissensions which he had excited, because of the oaths which he had violated and the anathema he had brought against himself. He was even forbidden to exercise the presbyteral and diaconal functions, and he was deprived of the reception of the holy mysteries and the communion of the faithful, until he showed repentance and appeared worthy that he was allowed to exercise presbyteral or diaconal functions. At the exhortations and entreaties of the Patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops, the friend of God, Bishop Mar John, was established and confirmed in the episcopate of the city of Pherat and as metropolitan of this city and from all the country of Maisan.

From there the Fathers traveled to Hormizd-Ardasir, city of [Beit] Houzaye. The friend of God, May Abraham from Rima, joined them. After having made the urgent corrections and having re-established in this city the agreement and the peace of Christ by the reconciliation of its inhabitants with their pastor, the bishop friend of God, Mar Sila, they descended into the country of the Persians.

After having done and successively corrected what presented themselves during their journey, the patriarch and the bishops who were with him reached Rew Ardasir, as well as Mar Abraham, bishop of Bih-Sabour, Mar Qardag, bishop of

Ardasir-kourrah and Mar David, bishop of Qis, who had recently joined their assembly. They remained there for a long time, until they had confirmed the anathema, the expulsion and the deposition of Isaac, who was bishop of this place and had justly been deprived of the rank and functions of the episcopate. Of Iso'bokt who succeeded him and proclaimed himself an irregular bishop, freely and without authority; and those who had been appointed, either by Isaac or by Iso'bokt, to the episcopate or to another rank of ecclesiastical ministry. After Iso'bokt had given marks of penitence for the previous acts, accomplished by him illegally, during the duality (of patriarchy), and he had consented in writing with good will to his deposition and his deprivation of the ministry, authority and the title of bishop which he carried irregularly and invalidly, the patriarch and the bishops welcomed him charitably, gave him peace and allowed him to exercise the functions which he had canonically revised, and even to remain in priestly dignity if he wanted to receive presbyteral ordination, just as all those who had been appointed priests or deacons by him or by Isaac, his predecessor, were ordained; for mercy was shown to them, after they had given signs of repentance and had canonically received the imposition of hands.

When these and other similar things had been decreed and decreed, they also deprived the functions and authority of the episcopate and Metropolitan Mar Acacius, Bishop and Metropolitan, and in his place the virtuous friend of God, Mar Ma'na, was chosen, who received imposition from the hands of the patriarch and the bishops who accompanied him, and was established bishop of the city of Rew-Ardasir next to his diocese, and metropolitan of this city and of all the cities of the countries of these regions.

The holy friend of Christ, Mar Aba, patriarch; Tami of Christ, Mar Paulus and Mar Ma'na, metropolitan bishops; the bishops Mar Salmai, Mar Mihrnarse, Mar Sila, Mar Elisee, Mar Abraham, Mar Abraham, Mar Khosrow, and Mar Qardag left Rew-Ardasir, and after having saluted, the bishop Mar David who went to his country, returned with the help of Christ to this country of [Beit] Houzaye. They successively did and reformed many things which they observed or which they learned in the villages and towns on the road to Persia, as far as Babani, village of Houzaye. From there, Mar Abraham, bishop of Bih-Sabour, returned to his country for an urgent matter; the patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who accompanied him continued their journey and corrected what was necessary in each village of Sourag.

They reached the town of Soustere. They called Simeon of Nisibis to their assembly, and asked him why he was acting illegitimately as bishop: a right that he did not have, since he had not received the episcopate, and why he had made, contrary to the canons, numerous ordinations of priests and deacons, which in fact were not such, since he himself did not have the power to confer these gifts on them. After he had shown great repentance and made complete penance for having

titled himself bishop when he was not, for having accomplished the episcopate functions which did not belong to him and which he only accomplished these fictitiously and not in reality; and (after) he had subscribed to the letter of expulsion, deposition and abdication of the title, functions and authority of the episcopate over Sourag, Ram-Hormizd or other places, the patriarch, as well as the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him gave him peace and allowed him to exercise the presbyteral functions in Sousterd under the orders of the friend of God Mar Elisha, bishop of Sousterd.

When these and other similar things were regulated in the city of Soustere itself, when those who had been consecrated by Simeon had been absolved and reordained, as had been done for those of Persia and each country: the patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him passed to the metropolitan city of Beit Laphat. The friend of God, Mar Simeon, bishop of Peroz-Sabour, joined their assembly.

The name Abraham, son of Audmihr, of Beit Laphat, would persevere in his audacity and his temerity. He was devoid of all intelligence, modesty and fear of God; he was full and overflowing with audacity, perversity and impudence. He had been immersed in anathema and censure since his youth. First, the late Mar Bouzaq was convicted for fornication; then he was similarly banned and anathematized by the late Catholicos Mar Sila, so that he would convert from his impiety and behave correctly as befits a Christian. Not yet freed from these penalties, because he had not made penance for his faults, he had the audacity to receive the lowered order priesthood which he had been forbidden to receive. From then on, the accusations of all sensible people multiplied, and the anathemas and censures increased against him. He then gave no satisfaction for his first faults, because of this duality, more fatal than anything, which divided at that time all dioceses of the Church of Christ. This circumstance provided him an opportunity and he found an opportunity such as he desired to plunder the sacred vessels of the formidable ministry of the mysteries of Christ. He hired them or sold them, and he gave their price as a reward to dissolute men and prostitutes; he distributed the gifts, shared the offerings and found the support of men who had no concern for the truth. He sent for Taimai, to come and defile it, by transgressing ecclesiastical canons; but the impious Taimai could not come near him; because he was reprimanded by the Fathers, the true bishops of this country, who had forbidden him to cross the limits of its territory by violating the constitutions established by the Apostles, or to dare to make an ordination to establish other bishops, to so to speak adulterers and rebels.

Taimai had sworn on Fautel (saying): "I will not come to this city to establish another bishop, against of one who is legally instituted." This Taimai, as well as Bar Sahde and Berikmareh, who were with him, had awarded communication and pronounced anathema against themselves (saying): "And yes, be it at Beit Laphat,



either elsewhere we dare, or if someone, with our consent, dares to establish another bishop for Beit Laphat, we are depraved and deprived of everything priestly ministry and that our ordination be void." Like Taimai, Bar Sahdd and Berikmareh did not come to the city of Beit Laphat, Abraham went to find them in the country of Maisan, burning with the desire for the episcopate, like a female dog in heat (running) after dogs in her ardor. Thanks to a knight, they had water and clothes, which he distributed to Taimai, to Bar Sahde and Berikmareh, as they confessed, they were trampled under foot and resisted the oaths and anathemas which they had sworn and pronounced against themselves. They thought they were ordaining Abraham: he was defiled by them; not only did they not confer any gift on him, but they themselves lost their rank because of him. This is why to the anathemas and the dismissal of the priesthood which Taimai, Bar Sahde and Berikmareh had pronounced against themselves. This was added against them and against the audacious Abraham the terrible judgment of the sanctions brought by the metropolitan and the bishops, and mainly by the late Mar Paulus, who was Patriarch W. After the death of the late Mar Paulas, the dismissal and deposition of the said electors was confirmed by the metropolitans and the bishops gathered for election of the person to be designated for the patriarchate. Later, in the presence of the friend of God, Mar Aba, patriarch, and the metropolitans and bishops assembled with him in Beit Aramaye, this impudent Abraham confessed (his crimes); he made and signed his statement as follows:

In the month of Sebat in the 9th year of the merciful and beneficent Khosrow, King of kings, — may it be preserved by the grace of God! — I, Abraham, of Audmihr, the Huzite, of the city of Beit Laphat, confess the following:

After the death of the late Saint Mar Paulus, of good memory, who was bishop-patriarch, the grace of God helping, the friend of Christ, Mar Aba, succeeded him in the possession of the patriarchal government, and I came to greet him. I tentatively hoped that he would overlook my affair, and that perhaps he would accept it without investigation; 'but having already heard about me and having learned, through the writings, that I was anathematized and excommunicated, not only did he not ask me, but he entirely confirmed the anathemas brought against me, and forbade that 'none of the fiddles could communicate with me; and I was only allowed to stay three days in the cities of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. These things appeared externally imbued with harshness, but there was a great advantage for me, because their rigor aroused in me the feeling of my guilt. When I saw that everyone considered me a stranger, penitence took hold of me and pain returned to me. I stood at the door of the Catholicos' house, barefoot without shoes, nor carpet, in great mourning. When the holy friend of God, Mar Aba, patriarch, learned of this, tear came from his eyes; he summoned me before him, and I entered, in the presence of the metropolitans, of the bishops, clerics and notables from among the secular faithful of the region and towns of Beit Houzaye and other

places, who were assembled near him. He delivered a great speech which suited the time and the situation; then he carefully arranged in order the crimes and actions of which I had been guilty previously up to that day, according to what he had heard or learned from the Merits, and he asked me the reason for each thing. With great long-suffering, he allowed me to say everything I had to say, to allege and to respond; and I say it. While I thought that my words would exonerate me, they found proof of my guilt. For our Father the Patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him, compared my answers one with the other, and one was destroyed by another which I had pronounced unfairly. After Monsignor the Patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him had used towards me, in all mercy, great leniency, gentle handling and paternal solicitude, I heard them pronounce with justice and clemency the sentence and the punishment. I praised God, Lord of all things, who strengthens in his Church the hope of Christ, who judged me worthy of receiving a remedy for my ills, by such an equitable judgment. I was amazed in myself that I could not even canonically exercise the order of the diaconate and the priesthood, as results from the merits of the late Mar Sila, Catholicos, and of Mar Bouzaq, bishop, and as I am now aware in myself, I had caused myself a new wound more serious than the first, by attributing to myself the title of bishop given to me by the impious Taimai, of Pherat, who was deprived of all orders of the priesthood, having anathematized himself, and having been anathematized by the metropolitans and the bishops; he will not confer on me an episcopate which he did not possess himself, and I did not receive from him, in any way, the gift of the priesthood, since he was totally stripped of it. This is why I asked our father Mar Aba, Catholicos, patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him, to implore for me the mercies of God, so that he would forgive me for having attributed to myself in vain the episcopate and to have caused damage and afflictions in the Church of Christ. I accept all the excommunications and censures relating to the prohibition and prohibition of (taking) this title of bishop, brought against me firstly by the late Mar Paulus, patriarch, and by the metropolitans and the bishops reunited with him, and then by the metropolitans and the bishops gathered for the choice of the one who was worthy of the patriarchate; and, now again, that I have been struck by these same censures and these anathemas by our beloved Mar Aba, Catholicos, and by the metropolitans and the bishops who are with him, who I have loved. I accepted with all my heart and with all my soul, in order to be delivered from this sin and to merit spiritual healing through penance, in the midst of these anathemas which were imposed on me for the great prevarication to which I surrendered guilty. I have given my word that, now and henceforth, it would no longer be permitted or lawful for me, in the midst of these anathemas which have been brought against me, by the consent of my will, to be called of the title of bishop. What if, from today onwards, I call myself bishop, or if someone calls me (by that name) in my presence and I do not reprimand him, or if I learn that I am being called bishop somewhere and I rejoice rather than grieve about it and flee this sin and this title which does not belong to me and which I do not have no power to fulfill the functions, I am censured and excommunicated,

even from the order of the priesthood and the diaconate, in which or in one of which I have hope that I will be permitted to serve when I have carefully corrected my previous mistakes. And I, Abraham, have written and signed this sentence.

I, Abraham, son of Audmihr; being witnesses: Mar Henana, archbishop of Hedayab; Mar John, bishop by Paidan-Garan; Mar David, bishop of Mazan; And the clerics of the Episcopal see of the towns of Beh-Ardasiret Ctesiphon; the priests next to the church leaders: Melkizedeq, Simeon, Ahai, Gartn, Stlai, Marai, Berikyakheh, Isaac, Saboar, Zekatsd, Samuel, Jacob, Osee, Daniel, Abraham, Abraham, Babai, Qayouma, Berikyahbeh, Simeon; the deacons: Acacias, Berikiso, Berikho, Sergius, Baloui, Isaiah, Jacob, Hosea, Abraham, Jacob, Pousai, Ahai. And, at my request, the virtuous, the chosen one of God, Mar Aba, bishop, patriarch, affixed his stamp and confirmed (this writing).

Totally disappointed in his hope, Abraham plunged into his malice after returning there, from Beit Aramaye; he did not do penance; he did not submit to his bishop, Tami of God, Mar Paulus, metropolitan, but he used deceit according to his custom. He assembled dissolute men and shameless women to come to his aid, with the Jews and the scoundrels who joined them: he found help among these people who unjustly gave him their hand; he wanted to divide the church called Beit-Mihr-Qouziou; and hoped to confuse the judgment of the Church with the judgment of the seculars. The patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him showed long-suffering towards him until he had exhausted all his means. he was finally found guilty even by the judgment of the seculars, not only that of the Rad, but of the Ahmaragar, of the Istandar, of the priest (mobed) of the governors of the country of the Houzaye, of the judges of this region, but also by those who were her patroness. They even ordered him to be shaved, to torture him, to bind his hands and feet, and not only to him, but to all his partisans, if they persevered with him in their audacity. It was decided that he would be thrown into prison for life as he deserved. But he fled and was not caught; others were chained for him. Then also the patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him pronounced against him, as unrepentant, the just judgment which suited his crime and his impiety. For just as he was totally deprived of the title, functions and authority of the episcopate which he had never even had, but which he had vainly attributed to himself; in the same way also, by the living and divine word which holds the heights and the depths, they expelled him, deposed him and deprived him also without hope or expectation, and forever, of the priesthood and the diaconate and even of any religious function. They excommunicated him and prohibited him from entering the church, receiving the holy mysteries and any participation with the idols, in the hope that he would do penance, convert and feel good. pain because of his sin and the impiety wrought by his hands. And if he who was coming had done penance, he could be allowed to enter the church and receive the sacraments among the laity.



The present act in which this deposition and this sentence are found was made by the patriarch, the metropolitans and the bishops who were with him, assembled in the city of Beit Laphat, and they signed and confirmed with their seals, with one accord, by the authority of Christ who said: "When two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them", and: "Whatever you loose will be loosed in heaven and on earth."

Therefore, by this authority and this power, I, Aba, patriarch; Paulus and Ma'na, bishops and metropolitans; Salmai, Mihrnarse, Sila, Elisee, Simeon, Abraham, Kosrau and Qardag, bishops, we have confirmed the censure and the anathema brought against Abraham, son of Audmihr, and his dismissal from the episcopal order, from the title of metropolitan, from functions of the priesthood and the diaconate, and even of any rank of the clergy. Let no one be permitted to communicate with him in the sacraments or in eating or drinking, until that he has manifested repentance and that he has obtained permission from us, by a measure of clemency towards him, which I, patriarch, will write and make known according to the penance he has done. Whoever names him, calls him or considers him as having the name, functions, rank or authority of bishops or priests or deacons, or as belonging to some rank of the clergy, in secret or in public, in speech or in thought, near or far, or in any manner prohibited by these writings; whoever transgresses any of these things: if he is a man, let him no longer see his wife, nor his children, nor his house; if it is a woman, a young boy or a young girl, may this sentence reach them and may the wrath of God remain upon them with the consent of all Christianity! As for whoever hears and observes the things written here, may the blessing of Christ rest upon him forever!

1. And I, Aba, patriarch, wrote, signed and confirmed these writings, as did the friends of God, the metropolitans and the bishops assembled with me whose names are:

2. I, Paulus, bishop, metropolitan of Beit Laphat, have signed, sealed and adhered.

3. I, Ma'na, bishop, metropolitan of Rew-Ardasir and its province, have confirmed and sealed.

4. I, Salmai, bishop of Karka de Ledan, signed and sealed,

5. I, Mihenaese, bishop of Zabe, I have adhered, signed and sealed.

6. I, Sila, bishop of Hormizd-Ardasir, adhered, signed and sealed.

7. I, Elisha, bishop of Sousteri, adhered, signed and sealed.

8. I, Simeon, bishop Peroz-Saboar, adheres, signs and seals.

9. I, Abraham, bishop of Rima, adhered, signed and sealed.

10. I, Kosrav, bishop from Under, I adhere, sign and seal.

11. I, Qardag, bishop of Ardasir-kourrah, I have adhered, signed and sealed.

12. I, Simbon of Nisibis, priest of Soastere, have adhered, signed and sealed.

13. We, Abraham, and Habib, and Balan, and James, and Mar Simeon, and Andes, and Mar Simon, and Mar Naesai, and John, and Baenai, and Bab Cavma: priests of Techurch-Barnahlafi, we all accepted, consented and signed.

14. We, Mar Simon, and Sapheai, and Gadai, and Nabsb, and Papa, and Babdouq, and Abraham, and Yzin, and AvmId, and Naese: priests of the Church of Beit Mar Abraham, we accepted, adhered to and signed.

15. We, Isaac, and Pousai, and Elias, priests of the Church of Beit Mihr-Bozed, have accepted, agreed and signed.

16. We, Pousai, and Mar Simeon, and Maewai, and Marwan, and Marwai, priests of the Church of Beit Yazdaidad have accepted, adhered to and signed.

17. We, Waedayb, Qarougbedh, Abraham Ahoumi, Artastansalhr of Irankourrah-Kosrau; Dadapheid, son of Simeon; me, Koldbovdat, Richanonlar; Isaac, son of Isaac; Behdad, son of Ahouhi; Rin, son of Abraham; Sabove, son of Abraham: of Karka-Ledan, have accepted, adhered and signed.

18. We, Adovrhormizd, son of Arduwan; Babai, son of Pousai; Isaac, son of Salma; Isaac, son of Abai; Mihehoemizd, son of Maldka; Abdalaha, son of Hormizd; Pousai, son of Simeon; Padoui, son of Salma; Zaduq, son of Sergius; Hormizd, son of Simeon; Barbasemin, son of Mahdouq; Pousai,

son of Marwdn; Mar Jacob, son of Mihin; Ahadabouhi, son of Salma;  
Mihebeza, son of Gouria, president of the merchants; Qamyzed,  
merchant, son of Mar Simeon; Amdaq, son of Sila, president of argentiers;  
Banounin, son of Gadai, chief of goldsmiths; Addai, head of the tinsmiths  
of the town of Beit Laphat, have acquired accepted, consent and sign.

19. I, Mabwai, son of Berikud; I, Babooi, son of Ada; I, Povsai, son  
of Marai; I, Mabdawai, son of Nabtrudaq: from the city of  
Hormtze-Ardasir, we accept, consent and sign,

20. I, Berikiso, son of Adoarhormtze; me, Mibbkouast, son of  
Ismail; I, Mar Anus, son of Abdisfi; I, Abrahau, son of Babai: from  
the city of Soniters, have accepted, consent and sign.

**Thirdly.** — From the regulation of used green habits.

To the friends of God, the metropolitans and the bishops, and all the alliance with  
the Christians of the East; Aba, patriarch: Hail to Our Lord, great hope. Even  
Holiness knows that nothing for us, human beings, is more useful or more  
advantageous than the fear of God, if, when we have it, we take care, preserve it  
and conform our lives to it, with great application. As it is written: "Fearing God is  
the beginning of the right path. All the riches of this world are not comparable to  
it; all the glory and beauty of men" in all their categories, and even of angels, in all  
their orders, is very vile and infinitely detestable without it; any desire which does  
not direct its effort towards it is abominable and entirely contemptible: it prepares  
in hell a share of torments for the one who possesses it; all wisdom and all  
knowledge which is not seasoned with it and whose aim does not tend towards it,  
are insipid, vain and useless: they prepare all kinds of afflictions for those who  
possess them; any power and authority which does not rely on it and is not  
consolidated by it, is weak and obsolete. But he who submits to her yoke, I mean to  
the fear of God, who fixes the gaze and attention of his intelligence on her, who  
directs the efforts of his will towards her, who does not regulate his speech without  
her, who has according to it all the acts of his conduct, in this short life where it is  
given to anyone who will, to acquire a treasure of justice through the practice of  
good works: he who is such, is the true familiar with Christ. But he who despises  
the precepts of our Savior and who, through the pride of his spirit, acts with pride:  
he must not be counted in any rank of Christians; and if he dares, deceived by the  
name or the habit, to count himself among the number of the faithful, he does it in  
vain, because he does not have the clothes of the spiritual feast: it is say the good  
works which suit the true faith; The sentence was passed against him, by him who  
will revive all generations: Let his hands and feet be bound, and he be thrown into  
the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Therefore  
we, as well as all the pastors of all places and all countries, must carefully, at all

times and in all times, teach, warn, conjure, protect those who are numbered, in any place, among the different ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchies, so that they keep from walking in the broad way that leads to perdition, but rather strive to enter through the narrow gate: by abstinence from shameful and senseless passions, from the desire for abundance goods that cannot be preserved, pride that seeks human glory; in order to thus avoid the endless torments of hell, and to reach the assured path of eternal life. As the enemy of humanity is jealous of our life, he continually attacks the children of indocility, that is to say, those who do not listen to the teaching of the Holy Books, to fulfill his desire in them, by keeping them away from good, as I believe. But (he did it) especially in the time which has just passed, when duality reigned on the throne of the patriarchy, and more or less in all places: division which lasted about fifteen years, during which he disturbed and agitated, like wheat in the van, all the ecclesiastical orders, thanks to the opportunity provided to them by dissolute and selfish men. So, like grains of wheat which, when winnowed, are agitated and seen from bottom to top and from top to bottom, suddenly projected from one side to the other of the confined van and in disorder, those who count at the many of the faithful were all more or less disturbed and corrupted, by the fact of the directors who rose against each other: each of those who had come to power walking according to his desire and his good pleasure outside the ecclesiastical canons.

Now that, by the grace of God, and by the care of the King of kings, Khosrow, — may he be guarded by heavenly mercy and by the prayers of all the saints! — the duality of the principate has ceased, that the unity of the government of Catholic see is consolidated and most of the provinces are reformed and pacified, it seemed necessary to us that the ranks of the secular trusts be reformed, as were the orders of the directors, by removal of the authorities to which they had indulged during the time of the disturbance, and especially by their application to justice.

We, the metropolitans and the bishops who have worked with us for the peace of the Church, have explained, decided and defined that, according to the spirit of the divine Scriptures, by the will and order of Christ, it would be thus: "The chains of cities or countryside will not be able to form factions, establish links, use oaths or writings to rebel against their directors or against the Fathers or others, nor resort to the protection of secular people whose conscience they disturb by their slander. Nor are the seculars permitted, for their part, as they did during the time of the disturbance, to excite schisms and disputes, nor to lend a hand to those who dare to do something similar."

This definition and decision concerns those who need to constantly remember what is written: Obey your directors. We advise them, as we do honorable colleagues, that none of them circulate through the houses; let them not be the stewards or prosecutors of the laity, to degrade the priesthood and provide opportunities for sin for the secular faithful. Let the laity, for their part, be careful

not to lend a hand to similar things.

God established management for the admirable economy of the maintenance of our nature and the perpetuity of our race, not in the manner of animals without judgment, but according to the rule which suits reasonable beings, and as a bond of love of the chaste and legitimate union of man and woman: but brutal men pervert it; for they were not content with each having one wife, as the first man, Adam, had only one wife, Eve; but each of them dared, during the lifetime of his legitimate wife, to take another in addition, contrary to the canons, and became a bigamist, like the woman who had two husbands, a completely sordid thing. Or, often, he abandoned the first, without a just reason, to attach himself to the one who excited his lust: either because of her external charms, like a libertine devoid of intelligence, or because of money, goods or riches, like an insatiable miser. For these two reasons, there are some who even dared to approach their father's wife, or their uncle's wife, their father's brother, or their uncle's wife, their mother's brother, or their mother's brother. their aunt, sister of their father, or of their aunt, sister of their mother, or of their sister, or of their daughter-in-law, or of their daughter, or of the daughter of their wife, or of the daughter of their son, or of their daughter's daughter, or of their wife's granddaughter, like the wise men; or their brother's wife, like the Jews; or are unfaithful, like the pagans. Concerning these and those who belong to them, we have decided and defined, we, and the metropolitans and the bishops who are with us, by the divine word whose power holds the heights and the depths, we have decreed and affirmed, in conformity with the spirit of the divine Scriptures, that no faithful person could, in any of the above-mentioned ways, use of an illegitimate union, nor pervert and disturb the proprieties of legitimate marriage, governed by God in his ineffable wisdom, for the sake of our humanity.

We further declare this: "To everyone who has two wives; to anyone who has united with a pagan, or with his father's wife, or with his paternal uncle's wife, or with his maternal uncle's wife, or with his paternal aunt, or with his maternal aunt, or with his sister, or his daughter-in-law, or his daughter, or his wife's daughter W, or his wife's daughter's daughter; whoever, occupying a rank among the clerics, has united with the wife of his brother, will be granted a period of time of one, two, at most three months or a year, if they obey, to arrive at regulating their affairs between themselves and those with whom they have united, and to separate themselves from them; because they most often fell into these faults during the period of unrest. — If this one, I mean: the one who introduced a second wife during the lifetime of the first, or the one who united with an infidel, or the one who united with his father's wife, or the wife of his paternal uncle, or to the wife of his maternal uncle, or to his paternal aunt, or to his maternal aunt, or to his sister, or to his daughter-in-law, or to his daughter, or to his wife's daughter, or the granddaughter of his wife, or the one who took his brother's wife, if he does not come and ask the priests to grant him a period of time, as we said above, to free



himself of his sin, or if, having accepted a delay and made a promise, he despises it and does not correct his fault, but perseveres insensibly: let whoever acts thus know that he is forbidden by the word of God, to enter the Church, to receive the holy mysteries or to communicate with the faithful, until he has left his sin. Let us also know that the sentence passed against men who commit these faults also applies to women, as it is written: "although the brother's daughter or the sister's daughter will not bring us down." This is not specified in the Scriptures.

We spoke above of the clerics who took the woman from their fry. As for the secular faithful who, out of ignorance, committed this same sin of marrying their brother's wife, not thinking that it was a sin to take one's brother's wife, but on the contrary thinking it very praiseworthy, as a result of their ignorance of the words of the holy Scripture which they did not understand, we have pronounced this sentence concerning them. We leave them free, in their own judgment, to depart from this sin of an illegitimate marriage, in accordance with the advice and opinion of the priests of the Church, which is necessary for their regularization. If it is difficult for them, if they cannot leave their wife, because they have been with Elijah for many years or because of the children they had by her, we decide that they will both fast, — I mean the one who took his brother's wife and the one who married his brother-in-law, — for a year, also; they will pray and supplicate her because of their faults; and, as redemption for their sin, they will give to the poor and unfortunate of the church of their city or their village a suitable share, according to their position, of the inheritance that they possess, and they will be given absolution.

As soon as we know and we will clearly know from the divine Scriptures and from the writings written by us on this subject, what sins accumulate those who practice this thing, if a cleric or a secular dares to voluntarily commit this fault, if he despises the sentence that we have brought against him, and subsequently unites with his brother's wife: let him know that he is excommunicated and forbidden, in heaven and on earth, from entering the Church, from reception of the holy mysteries and participation with the faithful, through the word living and divine which holds the heights and the depths and governs all the creatures.

By replication; by the word of God, that no one may transgress even one of the things which we have thus far clearly set forth.

If a cleric or secular person who has fallen into one of these faults revokes himself and does not correct himself, or if from now on he does not watch and does not avoid falling into them or from falling into similar faults or into any other crime, let him be banned and excommunicated, whoever he is, man or woman. And whoever does not fear and does not avoid communicating with that which is forbidden, whether in secret, or in public, or in action, or in desire, will fall under

the prohibition and anathema like the first: from heaven wrath of God remains upon them, with the consent of all Christianity. May none of the clergy or secular faithful be able to accompany them on the day of their death, nor lead their coffins while celebrating the office, nor bury them on the day of their death, either in secret or in public. But, since they have separated themselves, by their works, from the excellent conduct of Christianity, and since they have defiled themselves by marriage it legitimates, like dicks without reason, that they be similarly separated at their death, and deprived of any participation with the faithful; let them be buried like donkeys, like the cocks that they have imitated in their morals.

May the blessing of Christ be poured out on him who observes, keeps and fulfills (these precepts) and may he continually be protected! Be well and take care to make these things known, without negligence. Glory to Christ who honored his Church with virtuous pastors! and upon us be his mercies and his grace, for centuries and centuries! Amen.

**Fourth.** — From the testimony of the two people who had introduced the crime; absolutions and sentences which were pronounced against those who had been instituted by them.

Aba, catholicos: to the son of faith, clerics of all orders and seculars of all ranks who are in the land of Segesian: abundant peace in Our Lord, our hope, your manual peacemaker. We responded to you distinctly in the response to your letter, which we addressed to you previously, concerning the affair of the friend of God Mar Elisha and of the blessed Mar Narsei who fought against each other

Another for the patriarchy, and about each of the other things you have created for even instruction.

First, we need to know how neither Mar Elisha, nor Mar Narsei, nor both, nor neither of them, had received constitutionally, canonically, legally, the lordship of the patriarchal priesthood. In fact, the cause of Mar Narse, who had been first elected, was not yet established when Mar Elisha himself began to oppose, and thus laid the first basis for the disturbance. Moreover, the matter not yet being judged, Mar Narsei, for his part, hastily seized authority, irregularly, while it was not yet clear whether the victory or the condemnation of both or of one of the two. Now the greedy desire for domination and above all for the Catholicate did not suit anyone and even less these two men, because they had irregularly and illegally established the duality of the authority which is itself manifestly and clearly, beyond all measure, pernicious and harmful for the dwelling, the actions, the life of men; it is a contemptible thing before God and odious for Christianity; it is a shame and an anomaly in the Church of Christ, as would be two heads for the same body, or two husbands to possess one wife. The two (men) to whom it was most

decent to flee (the authority) and get away from it threw themselves on it without fear and thoughtlessly. And because of these two men, duality and division in the government of Christianity reigned and spread everywhere; the laws and commandments of Christ, the canons and precepts of his Apostles were left aside and neglected for many years.

I have also made it clear to you how, by the grace and virtue of Christ, Lord of all things, and with the help of the gentle, peaceful and philanthropic Khosrow, King of kings, blessed Paulus, catholicos, restored and consolidated the unity of the universal authority of the Catholic, and of all ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy which had been disturbed and was on the point of disappearing. He took care first of all to decree, define and judge, by the word of God, what concerns the bishops. Myself, after his death, I thought the same way, I found it good and I accepted it, and so we pronounced it thusly. It continues, that: "Mar Narsei and Mar Elisha having wanted to obey indiscreetly the priestly lord i nation of the authority of the catholicos and not having been established according to the laws and the canons of Christianity, nor by the will and consent of the two cities of Seleucia-Ctesiphon: by the incomprehensible word of God, it is not permitted in any way for any Christian, of whatever rank or dignity, to it is, to repete, call or appoint catholicos neither the late Mar Narsei who is already deceased, nor Mar Elisha who, of his own will, abdicated and renounced the rank and the office of the dignity of catholicos; for neither of them it had been legally established.

We have also written to you that Mar Paulus and the bishops have loosened, annihilated and annulled the censures, excommunications, decrees and prohibitions carried by Mar Narsei and his supporters against Mar Eliseus and his supporters, or by Mar Elisha and his supporters against Mar Narsei and his supporters; and what the late Mar Paulus did at first, I myself after his death accepted it; we have spoken and acted thus by the authority of the Holy Spirit. — As on both sides they had been ordered illegally in the time of duality and disorder, their work is in vain. We ourselves adopt what Mar Paulus and the bishops did out of necessity, because there was no other way. He absolved and consecrated in prayer and supplication before God anyone who has received priestly ordination, or the imposition of hands in baptism, or any blessing, or any imposition of hands in the name of the Lord, whether supporters of Elisha, or supporters of Narsei, since time of duality. What Mar Paulus read first, we ourselves, after him, have adopted and continued by fault and grace of Christ our Lord and Savior.

Likewise, by the grace of God, it was rightly defined, first by Mar Paulus and the bishops and then by Our weakness: That, if there is an episcopal see on which sits, as is fitting, only one bishop, and that we have no other fault or other crime to reproach this bishop except for having been established by the partisans of Eliseus or by the partisans of Narsei, in the time of duality, this bishop, having already been absolved, would be maintained on his episcopal see; and no one should

oppose him: by the word of God; — That if there are two bishops for the same seat, one from each party, the one of the two who possesses works of virtue and ordained in the orthodox faith would be confirmed in the episcopate. By the word of God; and the other would serve in the order of the priesthood, without interfering in the affairs of the episcopate, so as to no longer disturb the Church; — That if both of them! equally virtuous and faithful, the one who was first instituted would be confirmed in the episcopate; and that the other, as long as he who was confirmed in the episcopate lived, could not exercise the episcopate functions, by the word of God; and, if he must not cause trouble because of his episcopate ordination by the word of God. Nevertheless, he is permitted to receive communion before the altar in the diaconicon or in the sanctuary; and if the one who was confirmed in the episcopate were to die first, then the other would be confirmed in his place in the episcopate on this seat; —That if both were unworthy, they should both be deposed, and serve in the order they had before.

We have done the same thing, by the grace of Christ, for the regularization of the episcopate in your country, according to the letter which was sent to us by the majority of you, for the confirmation of Yzedaphrid, who had received the first episcopal chair in your nation. We have confirmed Yzedaphrid in the episcopate of your country, as we indicated to you in the response we gave to (those from) your country. But, since we wrote to you for the confirmation of Yzedaphrid, Sergius has come near us. Letters have been sent to us, by the rest of you, which make known his qualities and his aptitudes; truthful men who know him well have been found here, mainly Sourin Garmaqaya, chief of the camels of the reined, and other distinguished men, who have highly testified to his works. Concerning the episcopal ordination which he received illicitly, in the time of peace, Sergius, in the presence of all those who were with us, accepted the oath which we gave to him before God: “When I received Ordination, I was still ignorant and I had not even heard of what had been ruled and governed since the union of the Aba the Catholicos.”

Given the distance from your country from which he came and the difficulties of the road he endured; having also learned from truthful men that, during whom! was on his way, he persevered all day in fasting and prayer; and as even here he expressed great pain, sorrow and repentance at having received the episcopate illegitimately: for these and other similar reasons, we had pity on him. Although, as we wrote to you, he was forbidden (to exercise) the Episcopal order, we absolved him before Our Lord, we gave him peace and the office, and we made him participate in the sacrifice. — Moreover, having learned from Sergius and these rare men that there exists in your country a very suitable place for an Episcopal seat, of which we had already heard before, for the pacification of the disturbance and the increase of the peace among you and in your country, it seemed good to us that: As long as Yzedaphrid and Sergius live, it is appropriate that Yzedaphrid hold and govern as bishop church of Zarang, Pharah and Qas with their surroundings

and unite their dependencies, and that, by the word of God, it is not lawful for anyone to despise or resist him; and that the bishop Sergius holds and governs in the episcopate the churches of Bist and Roukout, and that no one is permitted to obstruct him: by the word of God. — As long as Yzedaphrid lives, Sergius will not be permitted to exercise an episcopate function in the Christian church of Zarang, Pharah or Qas, because they have been attributed and we attribute them to Yzedaphrid; and, as long as Sergius lives, Yzedaphrid will not be permitted to command or fulfill an episcopate function in the churches of Bist and Roukout, if Sergius is accepted there. If one dies, the one who survives will take over and govern the churches of the one who dies first, according to the custom which existed before the disturbance throughout the land of Segestan.

You, therefore, when Sergius arrives near you and brings you our present letter, write to you, and Yzedaphrid will write, to the clerics and the faithful seculars of Bist and Roukout, so that Sergius is confirmed on the episcopal see of Bist and Roukout. If the inhabitants of Bist make it difficult to admit an episcopal see in Bist, Yzedaphrid, you and the people of Bist, write to us the reason why they do not accept this. You will let us know, and we will see if the place is suitable for an Episcopal seat or not. [In the latter case,] Yzedaphrid will also have the episcopal government of Bist and Roukout, as well as Zarang and Pharah and Qas; and Sergius will live with him in charity and harmony; as his episcopate ordination remains in him, although he cannot exercise its functions and authority, he will be able to live wherever he wants; but, if he is not accepted at Bist, by the word of God, he will not be able to confer priestly ordination on anyone, nor stand or pray at the head of the people in the church. in the rank of bishops, nor renew schism and duality; however he will be able to receive communion in the diaconicon or in the sanctuary, in front of Fautel, in the rank of bishops. And if Yzedaphrid dies first, by the word of God, it will not be lawful to ordain anyone to succeed him as long as Sergius lives; but Sergius himself will take his place, by the word of God.

Furthermore, we inform you that it will in no way be permitted, by the word of God, neither Sergius, nor Yzedaphrid, nor any Christian, whatever his rank, to communicate with Bishop David, who is censured and excommunicated by us, unless you receive from us a letter announcing his absolution and the lifting of his ban.

Sergius receives and accepts everything written in this letter; he gave us his word before the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit that he would not be permitted to act otherwise; he put his seal on it and signed it with us.

And furthermore, if, as Sergius says, the head of this diocese who is Yzedaphrid consents to it, Bishop Sergius will even be able to exercise the episcopate Qas. The friends of God also agreed to these decisions and definitions:



1. Mar Hesana, metropolitan of Hedayab;
2. Mar Dairaya, metropolitan of Beit Gark;
3. Mar Moise, bishop of Beit Bagas;
4. Mar Joseph, bishop of Lasom;
5. Mar Bar Noin, bishop of Trihan;
6. Mar Simeon, bishop from Ma'alta;
7. Mar Paulus, bishop of Barkis;
8. Mar Mabouta, bishop of Tahal;
9. Mar Jacob, bishop of Paidangaran;
10. Mar John, bishop of Adherbaidjan;

And they put their seals thereon and confirmed them.

**Fifth.** — Definitions and rules relating to the various degrees of ecclesiastical government.

To my brothers and colleagues loving God: Mar John, bishop of Bahman Ardasir, metropolis of this city and of the entire province of Maisan, — Mar Henana, bishop of Arbela, Metropolitan of this city and of the entire province of Hedayab; — Mar Dairaya, bishop of Karka-Beit Seldk, Metropolitan of this city and of the entire province of Beit Garmai; — Mar Mana, bishop of Rew-Ardasir, Metropolitan of this city and of the whole province of Persia.

To our other God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of Beit Aramayi and other places which depend on the patriarchal seat;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province which is on the western border, in the region of Nisibis;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province of Maisan;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province of Beit Houzayi, in the region of Beit Laphat;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province of Hedayab;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province of Beit Garmai;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the province of Persia;

To our God-loving brothers and colleagues, the bishops of the frontier, and beyond, as much as they are within the limits and borders of their dioceses, near or

far, in the north or in the east.

Aba, patriarchy which you cherish: Abundant peace in Our Lord, hope and guardian of those who fear him, and support of his Church.

Every fraternity knows vigilant pastors of the reasonable lambs of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that the human body, as long as it is in this transitory life, must be governed by the regularity and moderation of necessary things, lest that, by their abundance, he is not suffocated or becomes indomitable or that, by their shortage, it is exhausted and weakened, and that, troubled and agitated by disorders, degraded and held back by vanities, he does not rushed towards the mine for some reason of negligence. Likewise, and even more, it is necessary that we and you, who hold the keys to the kingdom of heaven, apply ourselves with all our will, with all our soul, with all our strength to keep the definitions and canons of the Church of God, which is the spiritual body of Our Savior, lest the things which we have been commissioned by divine wisdom to accomplish for our benefit be lessened by any human consideration or affection, or by slackness. in the direction, nothing happens in our assemblies that which is neither permitted nor suitable for any of the Christians. Whenever the leader is healthy, those who are subject to his direction very easily remain unharmed; for they observe him and are directed by his hand. On the contrary, when he is ill, whoever he may be, as a result of the torpor of his will, all those whom he directs despise him and are difficult kept in order, being scandalized by the unseemly things he accomplished.

We are therefore obliged, before anything else, to take care of what concerns directors; for it is on them that all ecclesiastical concern depends, it is through their hands that all the works of the fear of God are accomplished, and without them Christianity cannot in any way be established, grow, spread. on earth among men. This is why, as soon as Our Lord was known to Israel by the testimony of (John) the Baptist and of the voice from on high, he immediately chose Apostles for them to educate. And, after having worked signs and wonders, after having heard. lords of his doctrine, he necessarily made known in advance, by his words, the heralds of his gospel and the leaders of his Church, the celestial gift which they were to receive, the power which they have in the heights and the depths, the works which suit them, their patience in torments, their labors in the preaching of his (gospel), this preaching itself and the things which were to be accomplished through it and because of it. of it, the struggles and the trials that they would undergo for it, and (each) of the things which took place before us, which take place in our days or which will take place after us. He forbade them anything that was not suitable for them. He too, this vessel of election which bore the name of Christ among the (Jewish) people and among the Gentiles, in the midst of the chains, the rods, the various tribulations which he underwent for the truth, the blessed Paul, watched with much concern for the pastors of the Church; he ordained metropolitans in the metropolises and bishops in the cities. The holy

Fathers who were chosen after the Apostles followed in their footsteps. There was no metropolitan or bishop who dared to cross the limits assigned by the patriarch, nor any bishop who thought he was allowed to rise above the metropolitan; but the true one knew the time when he had to go to the metropolitan, and the wise metropolitan did not forget the time when he had to go to the patriarch, as can be seen in the western region and in the neighboring regions; for, although schisms and quarrels have arisen there, for various reasons, on the subject of faith, yet, as regards discipline, that is to say the apostolic canons, the priestly hierarchy and ecclesiastical definitions, no one would dare to despise them, with (the hope of) escaping the punishment and the just condemnation of their contempt. When things have been justly defined by any bishop, none of those subject to his jurisdiction can annul them. Likewise, the bishop cannot cancel or transgress things justly prohibited or defined by a metropolitan; likewise, metropolitans and bishops cannot abrogate or annul the things justly prohibited or delineated by the patriarch; for the Holy Spirit has ordered the priestly hierarchy in such a way that the lower orders depend on the means, and the means of the superiors, as the degrees by which those who are worthy to receive the promise of ascension into heaven ascend, and from which those who do not obey are projected to sink into the depths of punishment. For they do not come to the truth.

This is why, when the patriarch calls the metropolitans and the bishops, or when the metropolitan sends for the deques, or when the bishop summons the assembly of his cooperators, they must obey promptly and without negligence; because they cannot transgress their superior. If the metropolitans or the bishops meet at the seat of the patriarch, or the bishops at the seat of the metropolitan, and if, for some reason, the patriarch or the metropolitan is not in his residence, the metropolitans and bishops cannot even enter the city where the seat of the patriarch is, or, if they happen to enter, they cannot in any way prescribe, act, write relative to government or ecclesiastical affairs, without him or without his permission, nor even perform the functions of their order without him. It is the same for the bishops in the seat of the metropolitan, unless, however, they are with the patriarch.

According to the will of Christ, things happened like this in our eastern region and in the adjacent regions, according to this tradition which is the apostolic (tradition). And when it sometimes happened, at the instigation of Satan, that there were enmities, that the bishops fought unjustly against the metropolitans, and even sometimes that certain metropolitans rose wrongly against the patriarch and dared to diet without authority or make contrary to the canons something which did not belong to them: what they decreed or did was not accepted, but the things done by them illegally were annulled; and the hierarchy established by the Fathers persevered as it was and was in no way shaken.

However, during the space of fifteen years that duality reigned in the patriarchy,

disorder and discord had spread throughout all the churches of the East and adjacent countries. All orders were disturbed; the ecclesiastical canons were trampled under foot, everyone conducted themselves according to their own rules, their own desires, impudently and in a disorderly manner. But these things have ceased by the help of Christ, who caused this duality to disappear from his Church which soiled the patriarchy, and the unity of the Catholic government was re-established, as is appropriate. The rules and canons which concern the ecclesiastical administration of the various countries, the regularity of life and morals of all the faithful, were established, defined by the late Mar Paulus, Catholicos, and, after him, by our weakness, while we descended from Beit Aramayd to win, with the metropolitans and the bishops among you who accompanied us, first Kaskar, then Maisan, then Persia and finally Beit Houzaye. But since then, the late Mar Paulus, bishop and melrop. of Beit Laphat, left this life, and we were not able to go down to them, as they asked us, to establish in his place the one whom divine grace had chosen. Here is also where discord has reigned in Nisibis for several years; their bishop whom they greatly oppressed, has retired and lives in his house; and we are prevented from going up near them to regularize the seat of their diocese, as in other places. The present moment, which is filled with great difficulties, does not allow us to summon you all near us to hold a synod, on the subject of the things that should be done. While waiting for Our Lord to come to our aid and for a synod to take place, for the benefit of all Christians, so as not to give the enemy an opportune opportunity to cause trouble in Beit Laphat or in Nisibis, as happened in Persia where some formerly seized the metropolitan authority without the consent of the Catholicos, so that all the people of that country were disturbed and fell into such difficulties and catamites that they hardly survived. ceased when we met together with the metropolitans and bishops among you, it seemed good and necessary to us to make and send to Your divine charity these writings in which we decree and define, with your consent, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by the will of his Father and the operation of his Holy Spirit: That it shall not be permitted either in Beit Laphat or in Nisibis, or in some other place, neither to the bishops of the province, nor to the bishops or the metropolitan of another province, to ordain a metropolitan bishop, or to enthrone a bishop already ordained, or excommunicated, to the see of Beit-Lapha, from Nisibis or from any other place whatsoever, without our authorization, our presence or our letters. That if we dared to order one, or to persuade someone to take possession of a seat, that whoever was ordered for Beit Laphat or for Nisibis, or whoever allowed himself to be persuaded to occupy one of these seats or any other, whoever it may be and in whatever way it was, will be deposed and dismissed from the priestly ministry, from the rank and title of the episcopate: by the word which holds the heights and the depths. No metropolitan or bishop, no member of the clergy, nor the laity, will be permitted to accept it, to accept his letters or to communicate with him. And if the metropolitans and the bishops, in their turn, transgress in any way, in whole or in part, the things recorded by us in these writings, from the beginning to the end, 'they dare to annihilate apostolic tradition and ecclesiastical canons, let them know that they are removed from the

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functions of their authority: by the word of God; for, as we have shown above, neither bishops nor metropolitans are permitted to infringe the constitutions and ecclesiastical canons, so that the peace of the Church is thus preserved and the name of God be glorified.

So sign and make known your support for these letters; may each of you seal them, so that, by the hand of their bearer, our common brother Moses, who will return to us promptly, with the help of Our Lord. — Be well and pray with us for the stability of the world, the peace of the whole Church, the life, health and preservation of Khosrow, King of kings, — may the grace of God preserve him! — And also for all men, among whom is Our humble Lord.

1. I, Aba, patriarch, have done, sign and confirm.
2. I, John, bishop of Wahman-Ardasir, Metropolitan of this city and of all Maiscm, I agreed, signed and sealed.
3. I, Henana, bishop of Arbela, Metropolitan of this city and of the whole country of Hedayab, I have adhered, sign and seal.

me, Dairaya, ev. from Karka de Beit Seldk, metro. of this city and of the whole country of Beit Garmai, I have adhered, signed and sealed.

5. Letter of accession from Mar Ma'na, bishop of Rew-Ardaiir, metropolitan of this city and of the country of Persia.
6. I, Samuel, bishop of Kaikar, I have adhered, signed and sealed.
7. I, Moses, bishop, have adhered, signed and sealed.
8. I, Silai, bishop of Kaskar-Maisan, I joined, signed and sealed.
9. I, Abraham, bishop of Seharqart, I have adhered, signed and sealed.
10. I, Sila , bishop of Hormizd-Ardasir, I have adhered, signed and sealed.
11. I, Abraham, bishop of Rima, I have adhered, signed and sealed.
12. I, Moise, bishop of Beit Bagas, I have joined, signed and sealed.
13. I, Joseph, bishop of Lasem, I have joined, signed and sealed.
14. I, Mihrnarse, bishop of Zabe, I have joined, signed and sealed.
15. I, Elisha, bishop of Souslers, adhered to, signed and sealed.
16. I, Simeon, bishop of Ma'alta, have adhered, signed and sealed.
17. I, Bokyiso, bishop of Ifarhagelal, I joined, signed and sealed.
18. I, Marcus, bishop of Beit Daraye, I joined, signed and sealed